

Message Text

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14

ACTION SY-05

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FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAHORE 0075

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: RECENT VIOLENCE IN LAHORE INVOLVING ARABS

1. FOLLOWING CONVERGING INDICATIONS OF SECURITY PROBLEMS
IN LAHORE AREA ARE SEEN AS OF UNUSUAL CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE:

2. CONOFF DOWLING WAS INFORMED BY IRANIAN FRIEND IN
LOCAL STUDENT COMMUNITY THAT PITCHED BATTLE BETWEEN SAUDI
ARABIAN AND JAMA'AT-I-ISLAMI-ORIENTED PAKISTANI STUDENTS
ON ONE HAND AND PALESTINIAN STUDENTS ON OTHER TOOK PLACE
ON ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IN LAHORE MIDDLE OF LAST
WEEK. SOURCE REPORTS THAT FIREARMS WERE WIDELY USED BY
SOME 300 PARTICIPANTS IN DISTURBANCE. SOURCE, WHO IS
ELECTED LEADER AMONG LOCAL IRANIAN STUDENTS, CLAIMED TO HAVE
LEARNED OF DISTURBANCES FROM OTHER IRANIAN STUDENTS CAUGHT UP IN THE
TROUBLE. SOURCE REPORTS THAT PAKISTANI POLICE, WHEN NOTIFIED,
REFUSED TO INTERVENE IN DISTURBANCE.
ALTHOUGH NO DEATHS ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE OCCURRED, MANY
PARTICIPANTS REPORTEDLY WERE INJURED DURING SEVERAL HOURS
OF MELE.

3. WHILE CALLING ON LAHORE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF
POLICE (IN CHARGE OF FOREIGNERS) B.I. TURNER JANUARY 20
FOR DISCUSSION OF SEPARATE MATTER, CONOFF DOWLING MET AND
HAD SIDE TALK WITH SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT RAOY NIBLETT,
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NEWLY-APPOINTED COMMANDER OF PUNJAB RESERVE POLICE AND A

PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE. (BOTH POLICEMEN ARE ANGLO-INDIAN.)
CONOFF ASKED NIBLETT ABOUT DISTURBANCES REPORTED IN PARA
2. NIBLETT REPLIED THAT, ALTHOUGH HE WAS UNAWARE OF THIS
PARTICULAR INCIDENT, HE KNEW ARAB STUDENTS WERE CONTINUAL
SOURCE OF TROUBLE FOR LOCAL POLICE. HE STATED THAT ARABS
WERE OFTEN INVOLVED IN LOCAL SMUGGLING AND OTHER CRIMES
BUT THAT THEIR EMBASSIES USUALLY INTERVENED TO QUASH
POLICE PROSECUTION.

4. NIBLETT ALSO REVEALED THAT A PAKISTANI POLICEMAN HAD
BEEN SHOT BY ONE OF TWO ARABS ON ZAFAR ALI ROAD (VERY NEAR
CONGEN) TWO OR THREE NIGHTS AGO. HE CLAIMED INCIDENT WAS
BEING HELD VERY CLOSELY BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THAT,
SINCE WOUNDED POLICEMAN WAS NOT ONE OF HIS MEN, HE DID NOT
HAVE FULL DETAILS OF CASE. HE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT
POLICEMAN HAD STOPPED TWO ARABS WHO WERE CARRYING LARGE
SUM OF MONEY. RATHER THAN SUBMIT TO SEARCH, ONE ARAB SHOT
POLICEMAN APPARENTLY AT CLOSE RANGE. (NOTE: NIBLETT
IMPLIED THAT GOP HAD ORDERED NEWSPAPERS TO REFRAIN FROM
REPORTING INCIDENT. HOWEVER, LAHORE SUN JANUARY 20 CARRIED
NEWS ITEM THAT PUNJAB INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE RAO
RASHID HAD CALLED ON CONSTABLE OF RACE COURSE POLICE POST -- NEAR
ZAFAR ALI ROAD -- WHO HAD BEEN "INJURED WHEN CRIMINAL SHOT
HIM THE OTHER DAY.")

5. NIBLETT ALSO REVEALED HE WAS IN LAHORE INSTEAD OF HIS
USUAL POST AT RESERVE POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN CHUHARKHANA
(SHEIKHUPURA DISTRICT) BECAUSE HE HAD HAD TO BRING 15
PLATOONS OF RESERVE POLICE HERE FOR UNSPECIFIED SECURITY
PURPOSE. RUMORED ARRIVAL OF RULER OF ABU DHABI JANUARY
21 FOR SHORT VISIT, RECENT STUDENT DISTURBANCES (INCLUDING
NOT ONLY THAT REPORTED ABOVE BUT ALSO CONTINUING TENSIONS ON
PUNJAB UNIVERSITY CAMPUS AND BURNING OF CITY BUS BY DEMON-
STRATING MAO COLLEGE STUDENTS JANUARY 19) AND SPORADIC CLASHES
WITH POLICE HERE COULD ALL HAVE INFLUENCED DECISION TO
REINFORCE LAHORE POLICE AT THIS TIME.

6. ACCORDING TO CONVERSATION BETWEEN TURNER AND NIBLETT,
OVERHEARD BY CONOFF, RESERVE POLICE ARE BEING WIDELY POSTED
AROUND CITY AS OUT-OF-SIGHT AS POSSIBLE, MANY CLOSE TO
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COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. NIBLETT TOLD CONSUL GENERAL
RECENTLY THAT ABOUT 600 OF HIS 2,000-MAN RESERVE FORCE
ARE REGULARLY BARRACKED IN LAHORE. ADDITION OF 15 PLATOONS
WOULD MEAN UPWARDS OF 1,000 EXTRA POLICE CURRENTLY IN LAHORE
TO MEET SOME AS YET UNCLEAR INTERNAL SECURITY THREAT.
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